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Message Text

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DRAFTED BY AA/SA:RHNOOTER:PJR
APPROVED BY EA:MSTEARNS
SA/RD:KMRABIN
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R 242254Z JAN 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 016251

STATE/AIDAC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, PFOR, AU, VS, VN
SUBJECT: INDOCHINA RECONSTRUCTION - MEETING
FEBRUARY 11-12, 1974

REF: STATE 6867

1. MONTEAGLE STEARNS, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY EAST ASIA, AND ROBERT NOOTER, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE BUREAU, A.I.D., MET WITH MACK GEOFFREY WILLIAMS AND PETER TIMMINS AT OUR REQUEST TO DISCUSS UPCOMING PARIS MEETING ON SUBJECT OF INDOCHINA RECONSTRUCTION.

2. STEARNS AND NOOTER REVIEWED BACKGROUND OF THIS MEETING AND CONCLUDED WITH REQUEST THAT AUSTRALIA GOVERNMENT SUPPORT THE FORMATION OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP
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FOR INDOCHINA AND SUB-GROUP FOR SOUTH VIETNAM, WITH

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UNDERSTANDING THAT OTHER SUB-GROUPS WOULD BE FORMED WHEN APPROPRIATE AND WHEN REQUESTED BY RECIPIENT GOVERNMENTS. WE EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF GOA SUPPORT IN VIEW OF GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY TO INDOCHINA AND SIGNIFICANCE AS MAJOR DONOR IN THAT AREA.

3. MACK WILLIAMS SAID INFORMATION THEY HAD ON THIS SUBJECT WAS SKETCHY BUT IN GENERAL THOUGHT AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD NOT YET TAKEN FIRM POSITION. HE DID

INDICATE THERE WAS SOME FEELING THAT CONSULTATIVE GROUP SHOULD NOT BE FORMED UNTIL ALL RECIPIENTS (I.E. NORTH VIETNAM) WOULD BENEFIT FROM IT, HOWEVER. HE ALSO MENTIONED POSSIBLE ISSUE OF AID TO PRG CONTROLLED AREAS.

4. WE SAID WE UNDERSTOOD DESIRE ON THE PART OF A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS TO APPEAR EVEN-HANDED IN DEALING WITH INDOCHINA AID BUT THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE ACCOM-PLISHED IF OFFER OF SUB-GROUP PARTICIPATION WERE AVAILABLE TO ALL COUNTRIES EVEN THOUGH SOME CHOSE NOT TO ACCEPT IT. WE SAID WE VISUALIZED SUB-GROUPS MADE UP OF DIFFERENT SETS OF DONORS DEPENDING UPON DONOR GOVERNMENT INTEREST. OUR VIEW, HOWEVER, WAS THAT CREATION OF CONSULTATIVE GROUPS NOW WAS AN IMPORTANT INCENTIVE TOWARD FUTURE PEACE AND IT WOULD BE SERIOUS MISTAKE TO DELAY ACTION UNTIL ALL POLITICAL AND MILITARY PROBLEMS WERE RESOLVED.

5. IN REGARD TO PRG, WE STATED OUR VIEW THAT GVN IS ONLY SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENT FOR SOUTH VIETNAM AND THEREFORE ANY AID TO PRG AREAS WOULD HAVE TO BE ARRANGED WITH GVN CONSENT. WE ALSO STATED THAT US DID NOT WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN NORTH VIETNAM SUB-GROUP AT THIS TIME IN VIEW OF NORTH VIETNAM ACTIONS IN VIOLATION OF CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT, BUT NEVERTHELESS WE WOULD NOT OPPOSE CREATION OF SUB-GROUP IF NORTH VIETNAM REQUESTED IT. WE DID NOT SEE, HOWEVER,THE VALIDITY OF HOLDING UP SOUTH VIETNAM SUB-GROUP SIMPLY BECAUSE NORTH VIETNAM MAY NOT WISH TO PARTICIPATE.

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6. IN CONCLUSION, WE REITERATED OUR HOPE THAT AUSTRALIA WOULD SUPPORT PROPOSED ACTIONS IN PARIS. IF AUSTRALIA WAS NOT YET READY TO JOIN SOUTH VIETNAM SUB-GROUP, WE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT GOA COULD AT LEAST AGREE TO CONSULTATIVE GROUP - SUB-GROUP STRUCTURE WHILE RESERVING QUESTION OF ITS OWN PARTICIPATION FOR FUTURE.

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7. WILLIAMS AGREED TO FORWARD CONTENTS OF THIS DISCUSSION TO HIS GOVERNMENT. REQUEST YOU SUPPORT AS APPROPRIATE IN CANBERRA AND REPORT POSITION OF GOA WHEN KNOWN. KISSINGER

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